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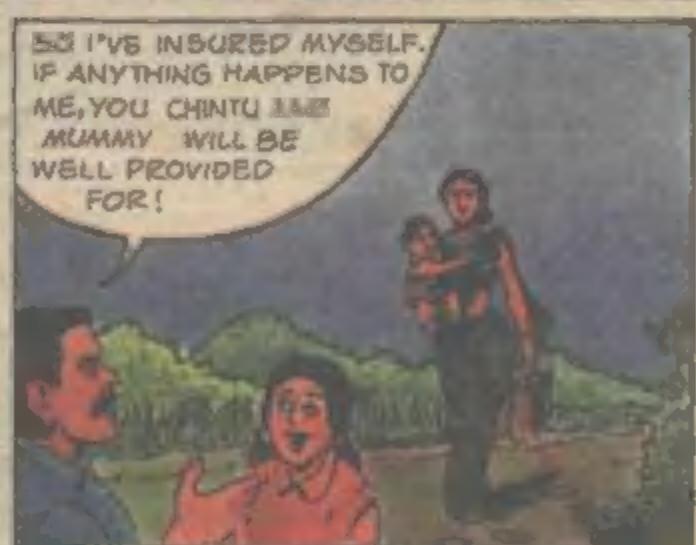
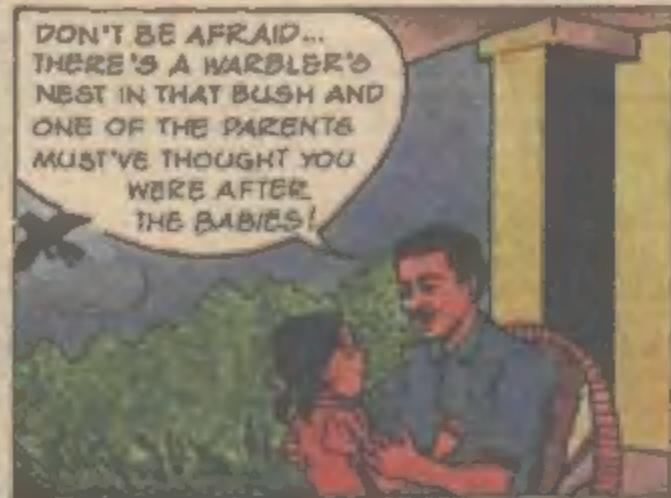
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**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 22 JANUARY 1992 No. 7

REVENGE ON LANKA: Answering the questions put by Ravana, Hanuman gives him a piece of his mind. "Kill him!" thunders Ravana, but his brother Vibhishana cautions everybody. So, they set fire to Hanuman's tail. Hanuman leaps and jumps all over the place, setting fire in turn to the magnificent mansions. His revenge now complete, Hanuman gets ready to return to Kishkindhya and report everything to Sugriva and Rama. **VEER HANUMAN** continues the exciting narration.

MUTHAYYA AND HIS MASTER: Thevar sends his servant to fetch letters from Gownder the shopkeeper (when post offices were non-existent). Not willing to part with a rupee for just one letter, he pockets two others. His master is angry. Muthayya's reaction is the "lighter side" of this story.

Also **ADVENTURES OF APURVA**, **CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT**, and all your other favourites.

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FORGIVENESS

Friendship and Forgiveness were the themes of a meeting held recently in New Delhi. What a lovely thought! In fact, the two are extensions of the sentiment that is often described as universal brotherhood and peace.

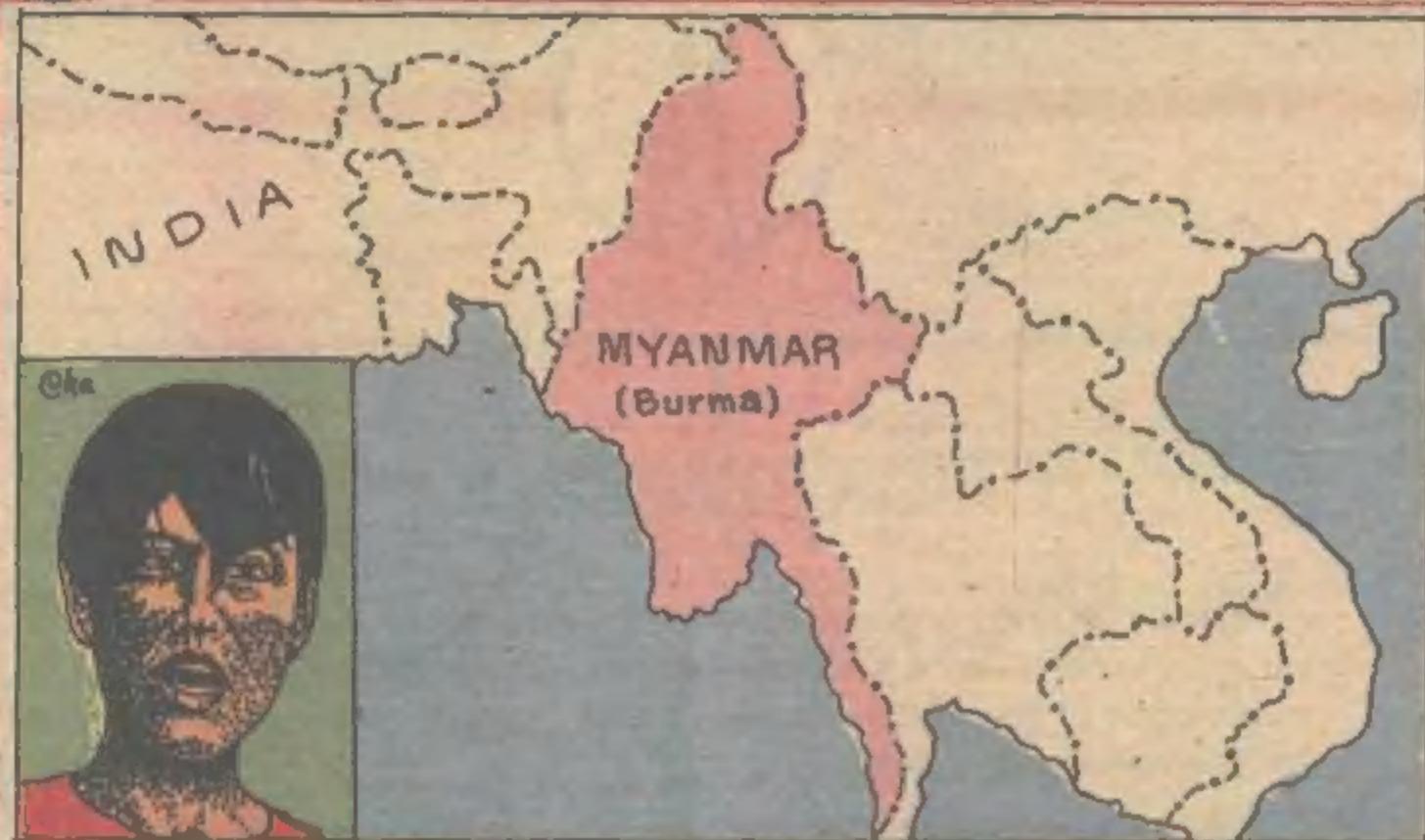
After all people have to exist on earth but nobody can lead a life of isolation. They live in a society with an equal share of all that the society can offer them. This, then, is the basis of friendship.

And friends do not harm each other. If, by chance, they wound the feelings of or cause any embarrassment to others, they seek forgiveness and are always forgiven. "To err is human, to forgive divine" goes the familiar adage.

Forgiveness indicates tolerance. "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," says the Bible (St. Matthew). Can there be a nobler thought than forgiveness?

Addressing the New Delhi meeting, our Prime Minister said the sentiments of non-violence and forgiveness should be encouraged and allowed to flourish. Like among friends, they should flourish among nations too. Then only the spirit of Christmas—peace on earth and goodwill toward men—will prevail.





The award of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar (former Burma) is of great interest to India, because she had had her schooling and college education in Delhi. At that time her mother, Mrs. Khin Kyi, was Burma's ambassador to India.

According to the citation, the Nobel Committee wished to honour this 46-year-old mother of two children "for her unflagging efforts and to show its support for the many people throughout the world who are striving to attain democracy,

Peace Award for Courage

human rights, and ethnic conciliation by peaceful means." The Committee described her struggle as "one of the most extraordinary examples of civil courage in Asia in recent decades".

Mrs. Suu Kyi is the daughter of Aung San, who is popularly considered as the founding father of modern Burma. The country was once a part of the Indian empire under British rule and it was the legendary hero, Aung San, who led the struggle for its independence. Tragedy struck independent Burma when Aung San and eight of his

close associates were assassinated on July 19, 1947. Suu Kyi was barely two years at that time.

After her college education in Delhi, Suu Kyi joined Oxford University where she took a degree in Politics and Economics. She worked in London University and was with the U.N. Secretariat for some years. Her marriage to a British national took her back to Britain. She came to India once again to pursue her research at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies in Shimla. While there, she wrote two books, one about her father and the other, a children's guide to Burma titled "Let's Visit Burma".

She went back to London to continue her research when she was called to Rangoon where her mother was seriously ill. By then, the people were reeling under the authoritarian regime of General Ne Win. Her return to Burma in 1988 was a signal to the people to rally under her. Naturally, her presence was eyed with suspicion by the rulers. The students' agitation on August 8 was

ruthlessly put down. Mrs. Suu Kyi did not want to remain a passive witness to the 30-year-old people's struggle for democracy. At a meeting on September 12, she demanded the formation of an interim government and general elections under a multi-party system. She, along with two other popular leaders, formed the National League for Democracy (NLD) on September 24 and became its Secretary-General.

On July 19, 1989, Martyrs' Day, she led a march to commemorate the 42nd anniversary of Aung San's assassination. The next day, she was put under house arrest. She is still to gain her personal freedom. Despite the fetters, she led her party to victory in the May 1990 elections, but the rulers have refused to honour the people's verdict and democracy is yet to return to Burma, which was renamed Myanmar last year.

The Nobel Committee has commended her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights. The Peace Prize is a recognition of her indomitable courage.

LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE GREAT

THE JOKE WAS ON HIM!

This happened before Indian Independence. Talks were going on between the Viceroy and the Indian leaders as to how a transition from British rule to a free, democratic government could take place. It looked as though a partition of the country was inevitable. Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, President of the Muslim League, was adamant about the creation of a separate Muslim nation, Pakistan. The Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, was trying to prevail upon Mr. Jinnah to reconsider his views. So, one day, he and Lady Mountbatten decided to call on the Muslim leader.

Mr. Jinnah arranged for a photographer as he eagerly awaited their arrival. He wanted a photographic record of their visit to him and even planned how they would sit for the photograph. He would request Lady Mountbatten to sit between them and even rehearsed the lines he would say: "A rose between thorns."

As soon as the guests arrived, Mr. Jinnah announced a photographic session before they adjourned for talks. In his enthusiasm, Mr. Jinnah went and sat in the middle chair. The Mountbattens did not suspect anything unusual about it and sat on either side of Mr. Jinnah, who had not forgotten the lines he wanted to say. The Mountbattens looked at each other. Did Mr. Jinnah call them 'thorns'? As they stood flabbergasted, Mr. Jinnah realised the blunder and apologetically told them how he had originally wanted the photo to be taken.

The Mountbattens thoroughly enjoyed the joke.



ONE DAY HE REMEMBERED!

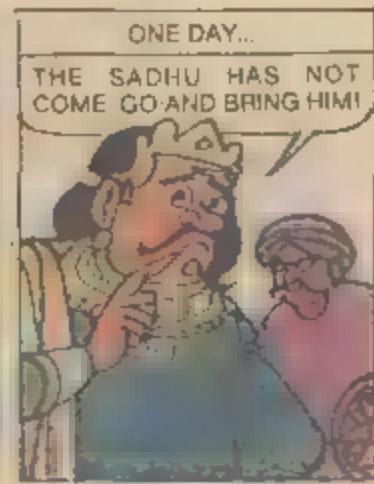
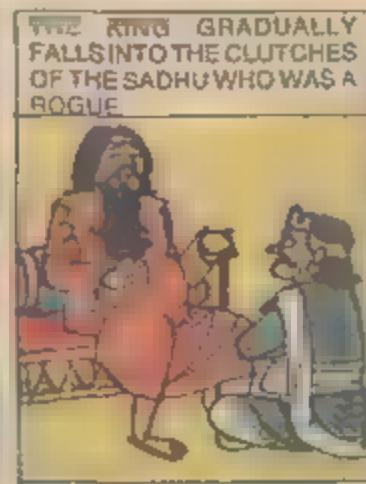
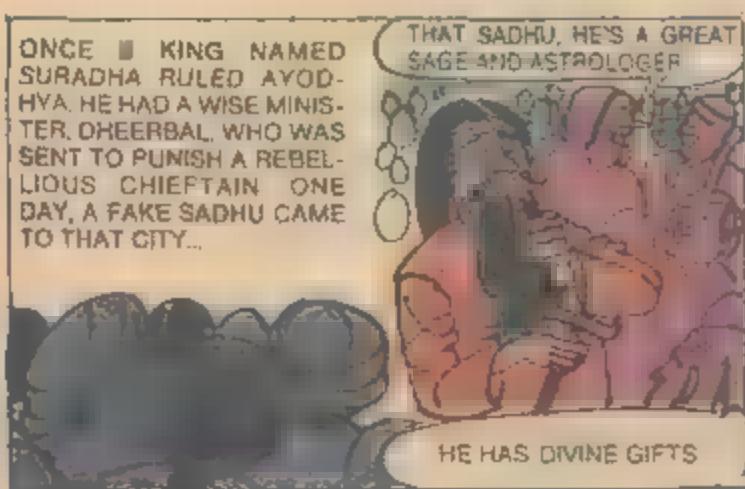
Devanathan was given to forgetfulness. He would not remember where he had kept things and go on searching for them. He was sure to forget to attend to the chores he was expected to do, so much so, he had to be constantly reminded of everything, and this responsibility fell on his poor wife, Thankamma.

There was a discourse going on in the nearby temple. Devanathan went there regularly to listen to the speaker. And without fail, he would leave either his shawl, or sandals or his umbrella at the temple, and it would be left to Thankamma to go back to the temple and retrieve it.

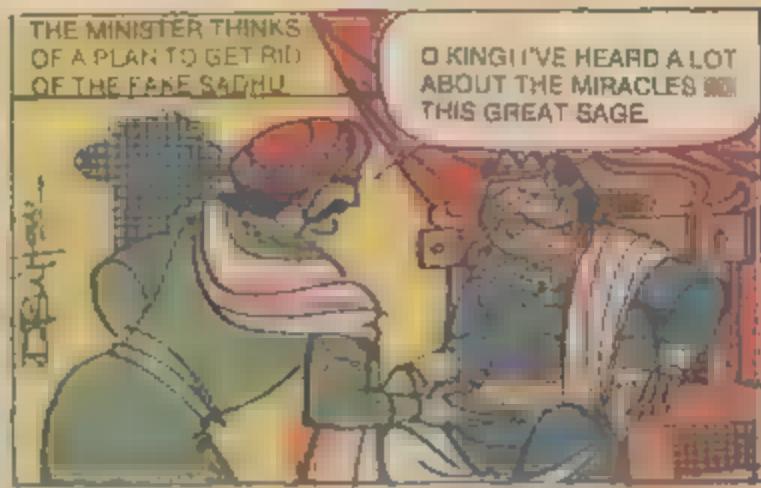
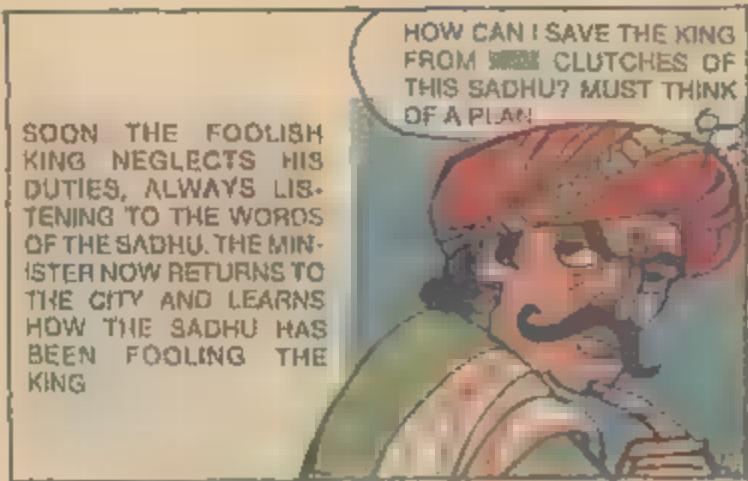
One evening, on his return from the temple, he told his wife jubilantly, "Can you believe? Today I didn't forget anything. I've brought back my shawl, umbrella, and sandals."

"Sandals?" exclaimed Thankamma, unbelievingly. "Today, you forgot to put on your sandals when you went out. I ran out to remind you, but by then you had already left. You must have put on someone else's sandals. What a shame!"

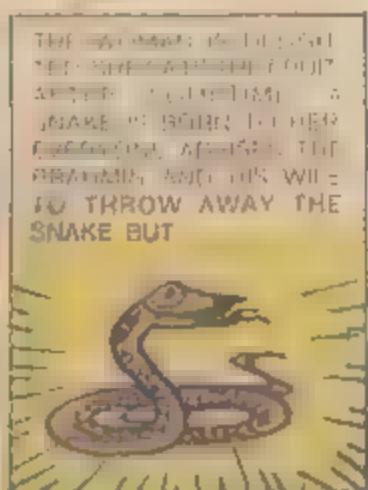




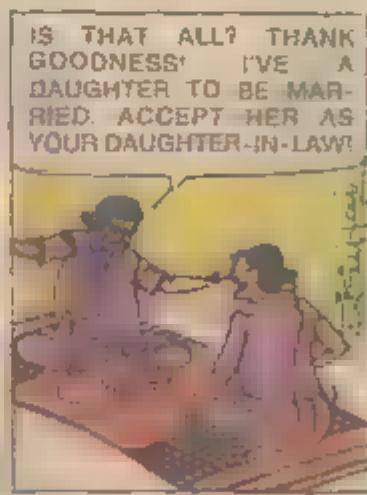
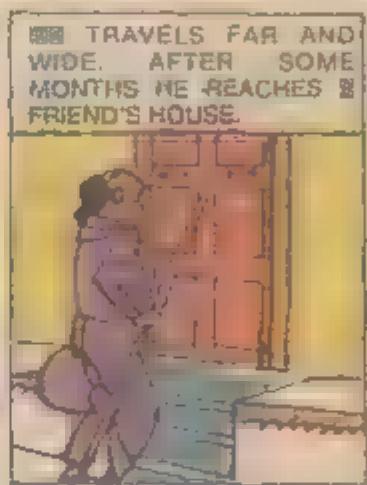
कुसुमस्तबकस्येव द्वे वृत्ती तु मनस्विनः ।
सर्वेषां मूर्धि वा तिष्ठेद् विशीर्येत् वनेष्यवा ॥



A genius, like ■ bunch of flowers, goes either of the two ways : either he is placed at the head of all (adored by all) or he remains ignored and withers away (like flowers in the wilderness).



वाच्यावाच्यं प्रकृपितो न विजानाति कर्हिचित् ।
नाकार्यमस्ति क्रुद्धस्य नावाच्यं विद्यते कवचित् ॥



One who loses his temper loses his sense. He cannot differentiate between the right and the wrong; he is hardly aware of his action or speech.

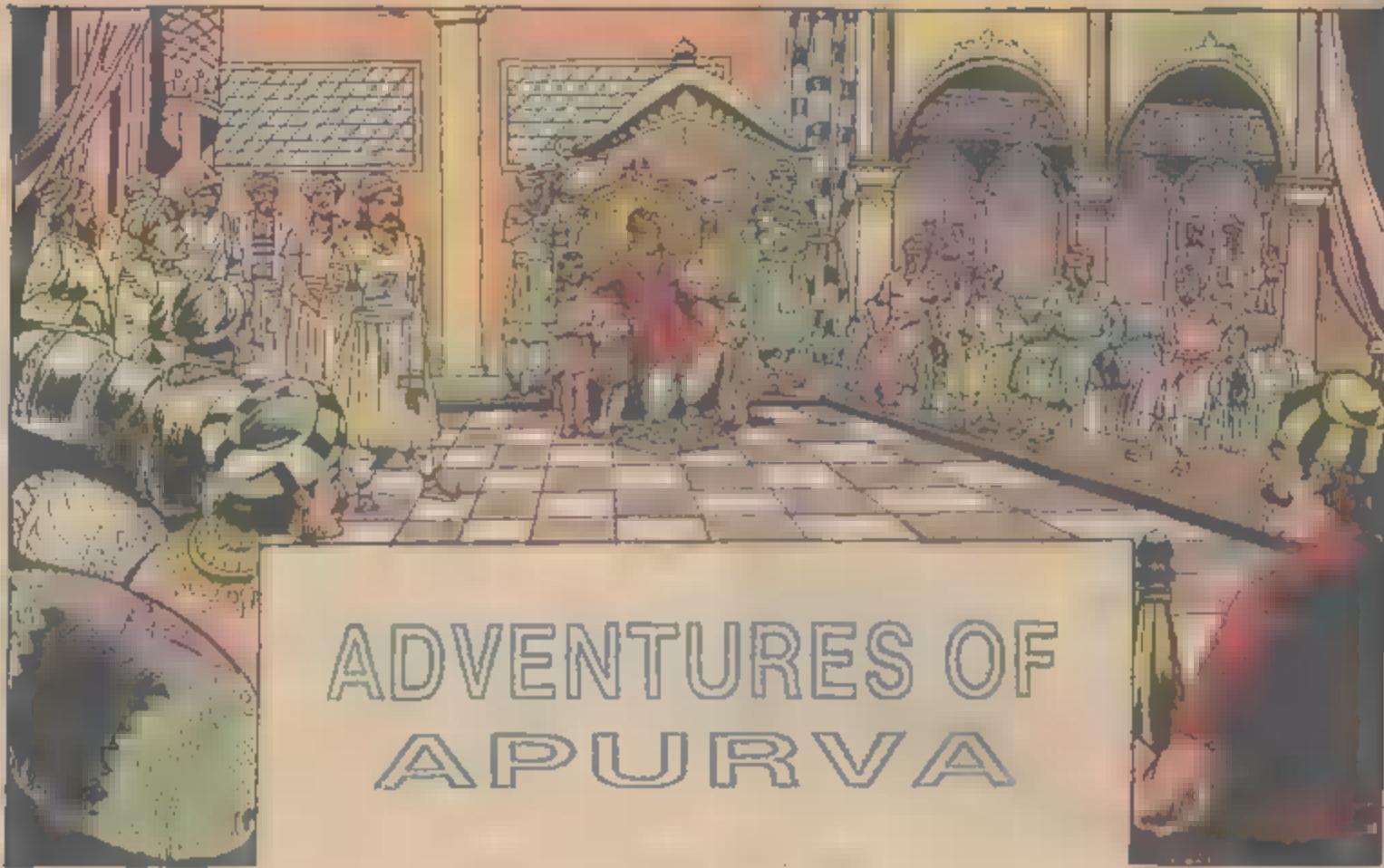
Sticking or Sticking Together

A student of Jogeshwari, Sudha E. Iyer, is slightly baffled with 'adhesion' (the act of sticking) and 'cohesion' (the act of sticking together). When she breaks something and sticks the broken pieces together with an adhesive (glue/gum,) she is in the act of adhesion. When there is a form of attraction by which particles of bodies stick together, that is known as 'cohesion'. Sudha might hear her parents comment, after watching a dance rendered by her and her friends at the school anniversary, that there was cohesion in their performance.

Reader Lalitha Srinivasan of Chembur, Bombay, wants to know the exact opposite of 'postpone'. Is it correct to say 'prepone', she asks.

The correct opposite of 'postpone' is 'advance'—like, the date of the meeting was *advanced* from the 15th to the 10th. There is no such word as 'prepone' in the English language, though we do come across several people using that expression, very wrongly. 'Pre' is used as a prefix to words to mean 'in front of' (predentate), 'before in time' (pre-war), or 'to the highest degree' (pre-eminent). However, the 'pre' in words like 'precarious' or 'predict' is not used as a prefix; it is a part of the full word and cannot be separated.





ADVENTURES OF APURVA

10

(Born out of a Yajna, the tiny, doll-like Apurva has rescued so many people in distress and has always tried to give a chance for the wicked to live a better life.)

With the capture of the bandits on land and the pirates in the sea, the atmosphere in the kingdom became quite peaceful. The widespread rumour that a supernatural being was protecting the people and that no wickedness would go unnoticed by him, had its effect.

Samir became an adviser to the

king who was a good and kind-hearted ruler. Time passed. Samir alone knew that Apurva was engrossed in meditation in the Himalayas, with the sage who had created him out of a Yajna. Samir had been granted a boon so that whenever he thought of Apurva with concentration and wished to see him, Apurva would

THE MOONLIGHT DIAMOND



appear before him. But Samir did not like to disturb Apurva.

In their remote Himalayan cave, one day the sage told Apurva, "My boy, so many sages and yogis have performed their tapasya and Yoga before you. You are not merely to repeat what they have done. You have to play a different role. I passed on to you a little of the incalculable Yogic power which has remained accumulated at a certain plane, so that you can use the power for the benefit of the people."

"Have I not done that? Have I disappointed you?" asked

Apurva humbly.

"Not at all. My expectations of you are fulfilled. I am proud of you."

"Thank you. Now everything seems to be going all right in the plains. There are of course always some problems. But the people concerned have to tackle those problems themselves. It is only through their struggles and efforts that they can grow," said Apurva.

"You are perfectly right. But human nature is very complex. There are people who can never remain satisfied with peace. They feel restless. They must satisfy their vanity at any cost!" said the sage with a sigh.

Apurva looked at him with some curiosity. "Are some such people out to do any mischief?" he asked.

"Yes, my boy. They are much more dangerous than the bandits or the pirates you have dealt with. The bandits and pirates were most ordinary people. But the people about whom I am speaking are important ones in the society. Some of them are men in authority, some are wealthy and some have great brain power," said the sage

thoughtfully.

"What are they up to, Sir?" asked Apurva with curiosity. "You have to find that out yourself. Once when I was worried about the future of mankind and fell into a trance in that condition, I had an ominous vision. I saw two men seated in an unholy secret conference. Only one of them I knew. He is the Chief minister of the king. I could also hear that they are to meet again tomorrow, at night. It was not possible for me to know the details of their plan. I suggest that you proceed to the Chief minister's house and gather first-hand knowledge of the situation."

* * *

Evening had set in. Sound of bells and conch-shells were heard in the temples of the city of Rudrapur. Between the king's palace and the Chief minister's house was a huge banyan tree. Apurva had perched on one of its branches and was waiting for an opportunity to enter the minister's house.

He could hear some joyous noise. Also, he saw the people on the open ground in front of the palace growing excited.



"What is the matter?" a passer-by asked an official.

"Our dear princess, Krishnakumari, is returning from her maternal uncle's house at Roopkunj. She had been there for the last six months!" replied the official.

Before long the procession reached the portico of the palace. The princess was seated in a bejewelled box shaded by a golden umbrella, mounted on a lovely elephant. On two other elephants, one that walked before the elephant of the princess and the other that walked behind it, sat four of her maids.



In front of the three elephants as well as behind them rode her bodyguards, on well-groomed horses.

The maids got down first and came closer to the elephant of the princess. The elephant slowly crouched, at the mahout's instruction. A cushioned stool was kept near it. The princess descended onto it and then stepped down.

King Viswa Varma had come out to receive his daughter. As soon as the princess saw him, she rushed into his extended arms.

"Welcome back home, my child, I mean from one home to

another home!" said the king.

His statement had a special meaning. The maternal uncle of the princess was childless. He had grown very fond of Krishnakumari particularly after the death of his sister, Krishnakumari's mother. Krishnakumari was also the heir to the throne of Rudrapur, because she had no brother. King Viswa Varma had refused to marry again after her mother died. Whoever would marry the princess was to become the ruler of both the neighbouring kingdoms, Rudrapur and Roopkunj.

So, Roopkunj was as much a home for the princess as was Rudrapur.

"What is this?" the king's attention was drawn towards a dazzling gem in a new necklace around his daughter's neck.

"I have returned rich, father!" said the princess, with a twinkle in her eyes.

The king lifted the gem and examined it. "Don't tell me that you are putting on the legendary Moonlight diamond!"

"It is so, Father! Uncle said that there was no point in keeping the diamond locked in the treasury for ever. It ought to be

used. Now that peace and security prevail in both the kingdoms, he thought that I should put this on. He got ■ beautiful necklace made for it. Do you like it, Father?"

King Viswa Varma kissed his daughter's forehead and said, "Your uncle is so noble!"

* * *

"What was a distant star is now within your reach! Now it should be easier to lay your hand on it!" the Tantrik laughed. He added, "Do you think it could have happened just like that? Oh no! I had to apply my power for it. Unknown to him, I inspired in the heart of the king of Roopkunj the wish to bestow the Moonlight diamond on the princess!"

"I understand, holy man!" nodded the Chief minister.

Holy man! It was the most unholy meeting between two most unholy fellows! —thought Apurva while listening to the two men from his hiding.

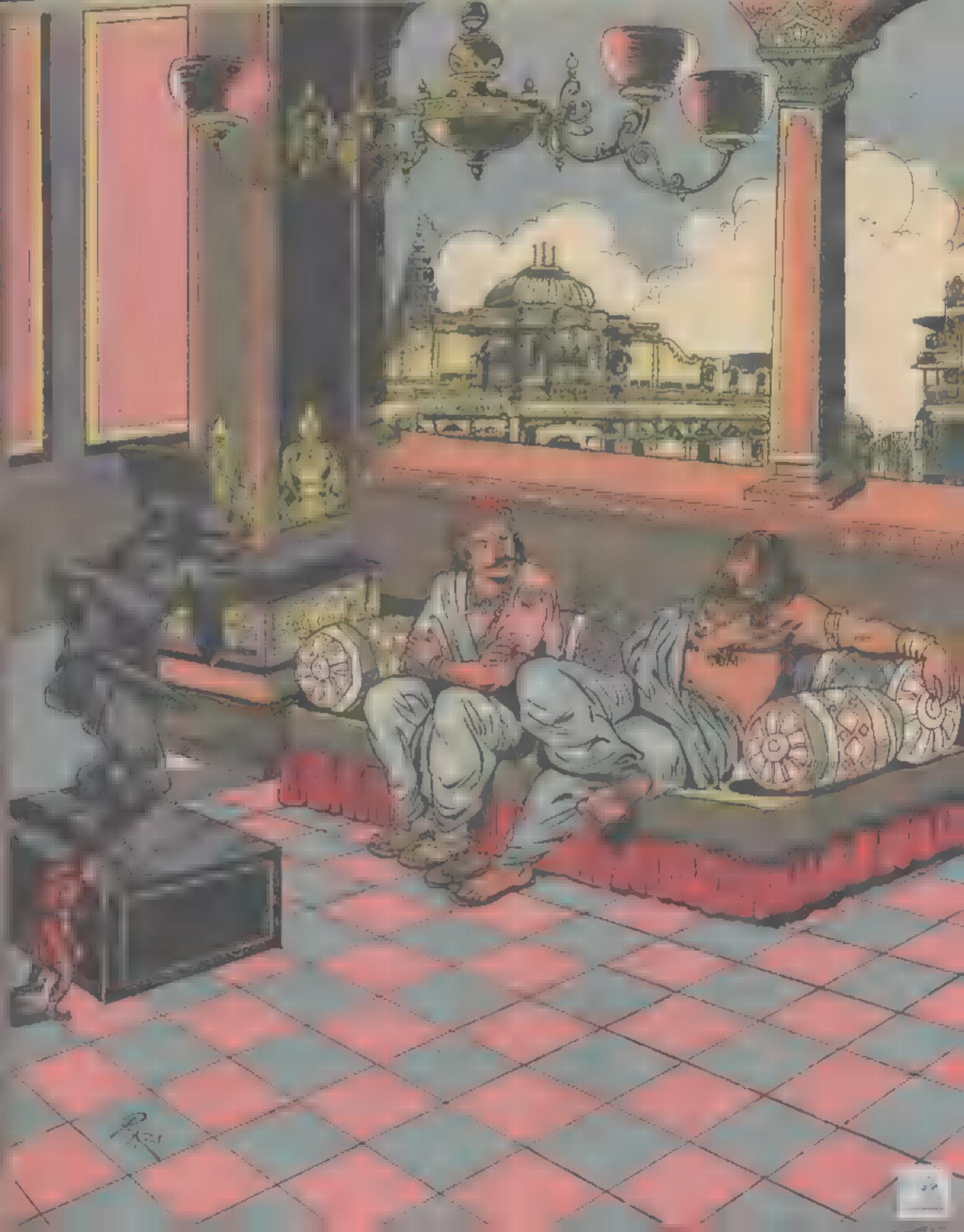
"We are lucky that neither the King of Roopkunj nor your king has any idea about the qualities of the Moonlight diamond. All they know is, this is one of the most precious diamonds in the world. They have no knowledge



of its great hidden qualities," said the Tantrik and he laughed in ■ suppressed manner.

From their hour-long conversation Apurva could roughly make out the situation: the Chief minister and the Tantrik had been classmates in their boyhood, while both of them studied at a gurukul. It was the guru of their guru who had made ■ gift of the diamond to the grandfather of the present King of Roopkunj. For three generations, the diamond was lying unused in the personal treasury of the royal house of Roopkunj.

The Tantrik had come to know



from an old manuscript about the strange qualities of the Moonlight diamond, that one who used it could become the monarch over all the kings, provided one practised a few special rites. The Tantrik privately told the king of Roopkunj that Princess Krishnakumari was under the spell of some evil elements and she could come out of them only if she wore the most precious diamond available.

The fond uncle, without telling the reason to the princess, had presented the diamond to her.

The Tantrik, of course, boasted before the Chief minister that he had influenced the King of Roopkunj to part with the diamond by applying his Tantrik force! The Chief

minister was dreaming of becoming the supreme monarch through the courtesy of his friend, the Tantrik. Apurva understood that once the Tantrik had got hold of the diamond under the pretext of performing some rites, he would never give it back to the Chief minister. He would become the all-powerful monarch himself.

Apurva could easily read the characters of people by gazing at their eyes. He saw that while the Chief minister was a fool, the Tantrik was a selfish and wicked man. He could do anything to satisfy his own greed.

What would happen to mankind if such a fellow became the king of kings? Apurva wondered!

(To continue)



WORLD OF NATURE

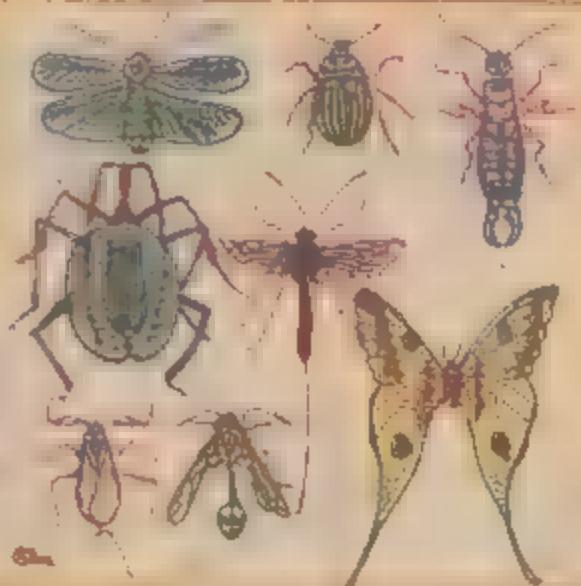


Tiny, but Hardy

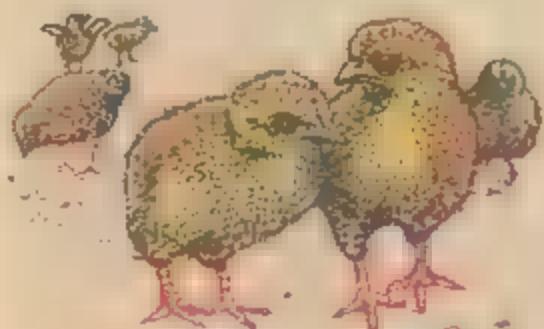
Nobody in the world would have escaped a mosquito-bite. They are so widespread that they can be "seen" in every imaginable region in the world. They have survived in the coldest regions of northern Canada and Siberia and can be quite "comfortable" at the North Pole—not to speak of the equatorial jungles, which are hot and sometimes experience torrential rains. Mosquitoes are among the hardiest of insects.

The Insect World

Out of 1,000,000 species of animals recorded on the earth, some 800,000 are insects. An average size book would need nearly 6,000 pages to enumerate these insects! And by the time one reads the list once over, these insects would have multiplied in number by ■ thousand times.



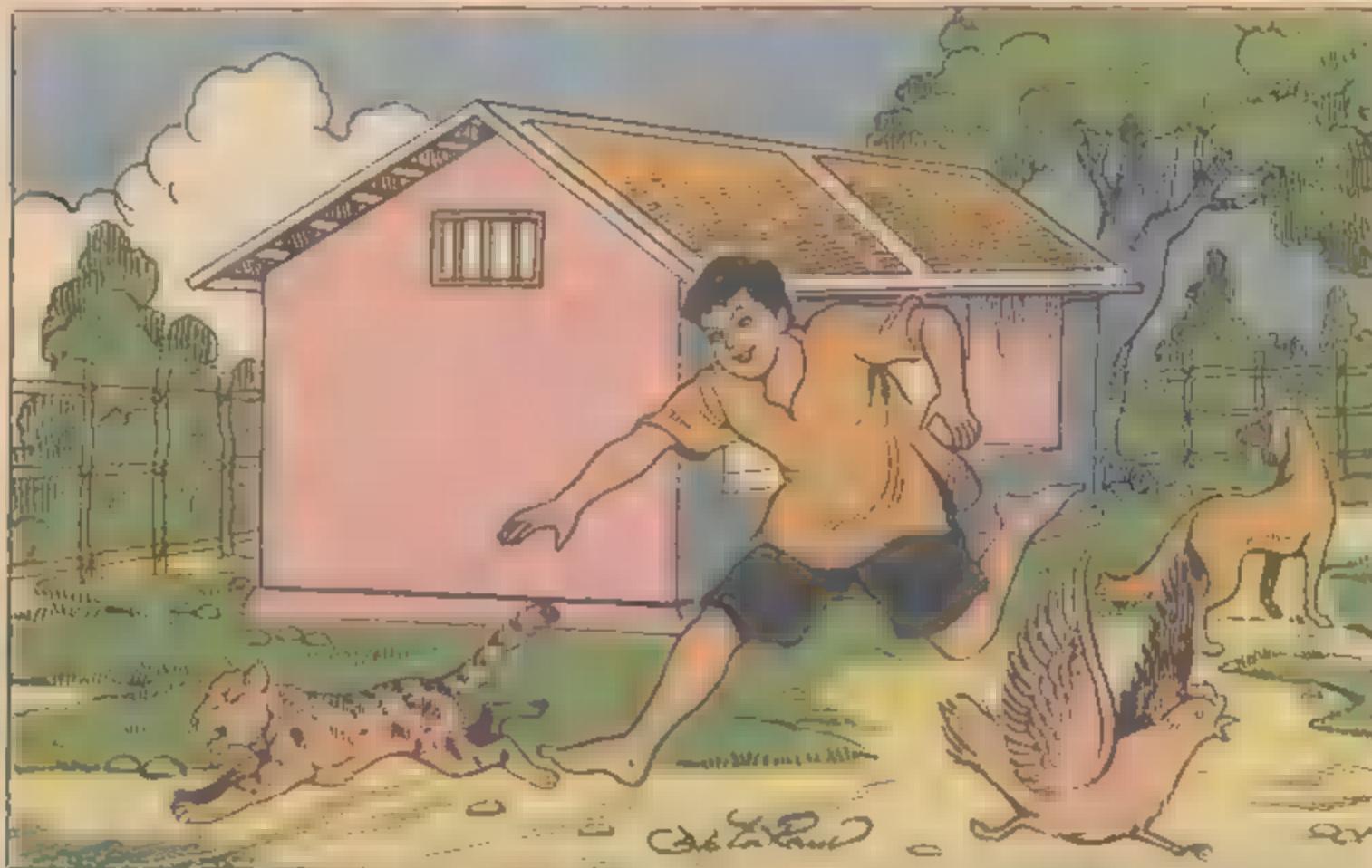
Chickens



A Count of Chickens

"Do not count the chickens before they are hatched" goes the adage. However, suppose somebody were to count the chickens after they are hatched? He would find that there is a chicken for every human being in the world. By the way, it takes two days for a chick to break out of its shell.

A FOOL AND HIS FORTUNE



Kannamma was an old widow, eking out her life by stitching clothes and selling them in the market. She had a son, Muniyan, who was a good-for-nothing fellow. The poor woman saved enough money to send him to school. But he would play truant and get back home early under some pretext or other, and for the remaining hours of the day he would just laze around chasing the hens and dogs and cats that strayed into their small

compound. When she found that he had no inclination to study, she did not force him to attend school and saved even that money she was spending on his education. He soon grew up, but remained lazy as ever. Even otherwise, who would want to give him any work?

Once Kannamma fell ill but despite her indisposition, she managed to stitch one dress, with a lot of embroidery. She thought if she could sell just this piece, she



might get enough money to pull on till she completely recovered from her illness. But she was too weak to walk up to the market. She called her son. "Muniyan, today you've to help me. Take this dress and sell it at the market. Mind you, none of your tricks!"

For once, the youngster felt like obliging his mother. "No, mother. I shall take it to the market and sell it. Just tell me how much you expect; I shall try to get that much for you."

Kannamma heaved a sigh of relief. "Not much, son. If we get twenty rupees, — should be

happy. Remember this. If you make sure you sell it to someone who does not talk much, he may pay that much. Suppose the buyer tries to argue with you, then the dress will soon be in his hands, and your pocket will remain almost empty."

Muniyan packed the dress, assured his mother that he would remember her instructions, and left for the market whistling a tune that came to his lips. He had not gone far when he met a farmer from his village. Kuppusami was returning from the market after selling some rice. As Muniyan would seldom be seen on the road, the farmer was surprised and curious. "Where're you going, Muniyan?"

"I'm just running up to the market. Mother has given me a dress to sell," he replied.

"A dress, did you say? Can I take a look at it?", queried Kuppusami.

"Of course," said Muniyan, happy over the prospect of striking a deal before walking all the distance to the market and of returning home earlier than he had thought of. He opened the packet and held the dress by both hands. "Mother wants twenty

rupees for it," he said, casually.

"Twenty rupees? That's too much," the farmer protested. "I can get better stuff in the market for a lower price. Don't I know you? You're trying to make some easy money without your mother's knowledge."

Muniyan did not wait to listen to all that the farmer was saying. He had already packed up the dress again and was about to start walking. "Well, I don't want to bargain. In fact, I don't wish to sell this to you at all. You talk too much. Sorry."

Kuppusami was taken aback. "What has my talking to do with the dress?" he wondered aloud.

"Ah! There you go again. Mother was right. Good-bye!" Muniyan did not look back to see anger creeping into the farmer's face. He continued to walk, till he came to a statue on the roadside. It was that of a woman. "Amma, would you want to buy a dress from me?" he asked her, at the same time untying the packet in his hand.

The statue, of course, said nothing. "Ah! That's perfect, just as mother had told me, that I should sell the dress to someone who does not talk. I can't think of anybody better than you, Amma," Muniyan added loudly, though not loud enough for the





statue to hear! "My mother had made this by her own hands, and she is asking for just twenty rupees. I'm sure you can afford that much." He then placed the dress on one of the outstretched hands of the statue. "I shall come back for the money tomorrow," he said without waiting for any answer from the "Amma" standing on the roadside. He turned and went back the way he came and soon reached home.

"Muniyan," his mother asked him anxiously, "did you sell the dress?"

"Yes, mother, I sold it," said

Muniyan in a contended tone. "I'll get the money tomorrow."

"That's good, but do tell me, did you give it to a trustworthy person?" His mother's voice had a trace of doubt.

You must have by now concluded that Muniyan must be a fool of the first order. You have not gone wrong. Evidently he never realised that "Amma" was a statue; what he also did not know was that it was a hollow statue, made use of by some robbers to hide all the money and jewellery they used to steal. Late in the night, they went back to the statue to deposit all the valuables they had lifted from houses, when they saw the dress hanging from the statue's hand.

"Look! Someone has left a beautiful piece of cloth for the "Amman", as though She is going to wear it!" He took it off the statue and put it in his bag.

The robbers securely hid their loot as usual and went their way.

Next morning, Muniyan got up early and persuaded his mother to give him food, so that he could go and collect the money. "Make sure that you get all the twenty rupees. Don't

forget to count the coins," cautioned his mother as he was stepping out of the house.

"Of course, mother," he said, without turning back to his mother. "She won't cheat me, she had an honest face." Muniyan was already on the road at a fast pace.

When he reached where the statue stood, still with outstretched hands, he did not think there was anything strange about her. He was, instead, happy that the dress had been taken. "Vanakkam, Amma," he said politely. "I hope you liked the dress. Can I have the money? All the twenty rupees?"

There was no reply. Muniyan looked at her face, for a moment. "Now, look here, Amma, I see you've taken the dress. It's only fair that you pay its price. Or, if you don't like the dress, you may return it. I shall sell it to someone else."

The statue was silent. Now Muniyan was really angry. He searched for a large-sized stone and threw it at her with all his might.

The statue broke into pieces, spilling all the money and precious items it held in its hollow on to the ground. A delighted Muniyan tore a corner of his dhoti and gathered every bit into



it, tied the bundle tight and turned and broke into a run.

He was soon back home. He untied the bundle and spread the money, jewels, and everything else for his mother to see. "Look, mother, how much money and jewels I've brought you! Didn't I tell you she was a good woman? And she had an honest face? At first, I thought she wasn't going to pay me. But when I threw a stone at her, she gave me all this."

"Muniyan!" cried his mother aloud. "You hit a woman with a stone and forced her to give you this fortune? Who was that woman?" she demanded.

"You must have seen her on your way to the market. Standing on the roadside with outstretched hands," Muniyan described the Amma he had

accosted.

"Oh! You fool! You fool!" his mother was horrified. "Do you realize what you've done? It was an Amman statue. Anyway, what do we do with all this money? I had better find a wife for you, to look after you. I'll be gone tomorrow day, and you are too foolish to be entrusted with this fortune."

"But, mother, you call me a fool. Which decent girl would come forward to marry a fool like me?"

"Don't worry, my son," Kannamma said reassuringly. "A fool with no money can never find a girl; but a fool with a fortune can have his choice of the finest girl."

Kannamma stopped stitching clothes, as she had to go in search of a bride for her foolish son.



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT—38



DEITIES OF INDIA

BUDDHA

Born in the royal family of Kapilavastu in the frontiers of present-day Uttar Pradesh and Nepal, Prince Gautama renounced the world and passed years in *tapasya*. Then he emerged as the Buddha or the Enlightened One. He lived from 566 to 486 B.C., for 80 years.

He taught that man suffers because of his desires. Liberation from suffering as well as from the chain of birth and death will be possible if one can conquer one's desires.

His teachings grew popular far and wide. The Hindus accepted him as one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu. Today Buddhism covers one-third of the world's population.

INDIA'S YOUNGEST



A public reception was held in Calcutta in honour of an 8-year-old boy sometime in July. Who ■■■ he? None other than Suryasekhar Ganguly, who bagged ■ bronze medal at the World Sub-Junior Chess championship in Warsaw, Poland, in the first half of July. At the end of 11 rounds, Surya had collected 8 points. The gold went to Leros Andrea of France, who had 8.5 points, and the silver to Paco Valeka who, with 8 points like Surya, ■■■ placed second with his better progressive record.

On the second day of the tournament, world champion Gary Kasparov was standing behind Surya, watching the "little master" wipe out his opponent in just 16 moves. Kasparov's coach, Eddie Gufeld, later predicted: "This boy will play for a world title in the next 10 or 12 years!"

This 3rd standard student of Scottish Church Collegiate School is the son of Pankaj Ganguly and Aarti. A professional astrologer, Pankaj Ganguly believes that his son is under the influence of six favourable stars. He has made Surya wear two rings, one pearl studded and the other sapphire! Surya's elders on his mother's side are all chess-players. He had his initiation by his maternal grandfather, Anil Basu Mullick, when he was just three. He played his first official match when he was five years. His record till now is, 37 national level competitions, 27 State-level events, and two all-India Open tournaments. Warsaw saw his first international debut.

Standing 4 ft 2 inches, Surya loves to play football and cricket. He is right now India's youngest sportsman in any discipline. He likes mathematics, but his favourite is the Bible Class. He reads the Bible like ■ story-book. He is endowed with a good memory, speed at calculation, and a keen desire for innovation. He has been described ■■■ "violent tactician who can calculate like a computer".

A worthy successor to India's earlier world junior champions, Dibyendru Barua (1978) and Viswanathan Anand (1987).

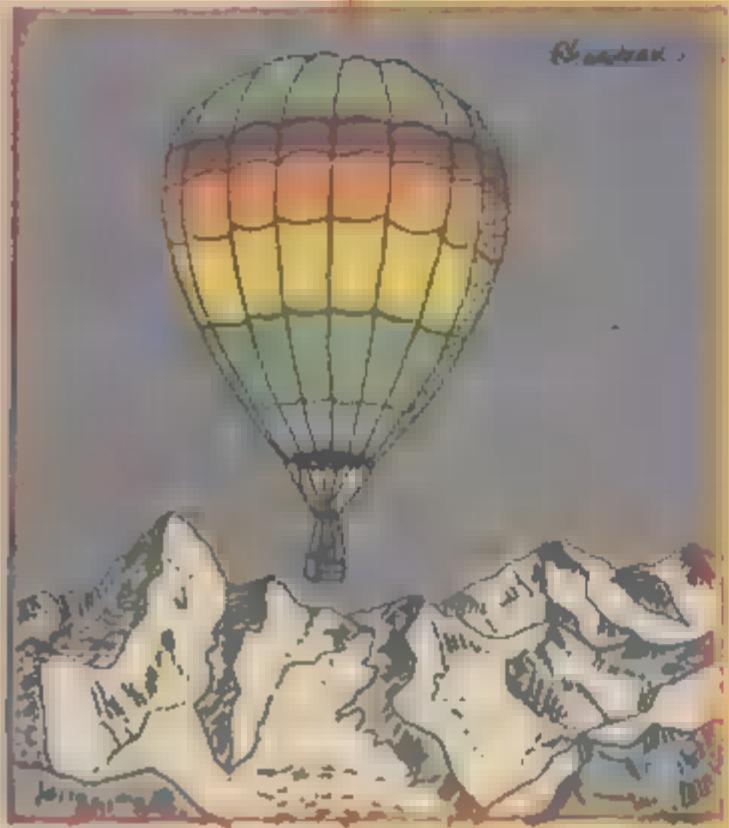


DO YOU KNOW?

1. In which country was tea grown first?
2. Which is heavier, milk or cream?
3. What are the five "pillars" in Islam?
4. How is Jesus referred to in the Koran?
5. Where does the name Christ come from?
6. Jesus was baptised in the waters of a river. Which river?
7. What is the meaning of Bethlehem?
8. What is the name of the first Russian satellite that went into space? When was it?
9. Who holds the cricket record for hitting the maximum number of sixes? Whose record did he break?
10. In which battle was poison gas first used?
11. Who is believed to be the patron saint of Music?
12. What was the first writing implement to use ink?
13. Which is the largest desert in Asia?
14. To which country did Christopher Columbus belong?
15. Which country resorted to paper money first?

ANSWERS

1. China
 2. Milk
 3. Profession of faith, daily prayers, giving alms, fasting in the month of Ramadan.
 4. Pilgrimage to Mecca.
 5. The Greek word "Christos", it means 'the anointed one'.
 6. The Jordan river, in Israel.
 7. The house of the god, or the house of bread.
 8. Sputnik, it went into space on October 4, 1957.
 9. Ian Botham, for Somerset. He hit 80 sixes in 1985, breaking the 1935 record of 66 by Arthur Wellard.
 10. The first battle of Ypres, during the First World War (1914-1918).
 11. Saint Cecilia
 12. Quill
 13. The Arabian desert
 14. Italy
 15. China
- Bethlehem is the birthplace of Jesus Christ.



Balloons Over Everest

For the first ever time, two hot-air balloons flew over Mount Everest and landed safely in Tibet in the third week of October. The flight took more than an hour after the take-off from Nepal. One of the balloons carried an Australian and a Briton, while the other had two Britons aboard. It was a joint Australian-British Everest Balloon Expedition. The balloons flew some 300 metres above the 8,848m peak, named Mount Sagarmatha by the Nepalese. It was a historic event.

NEWS FLASH

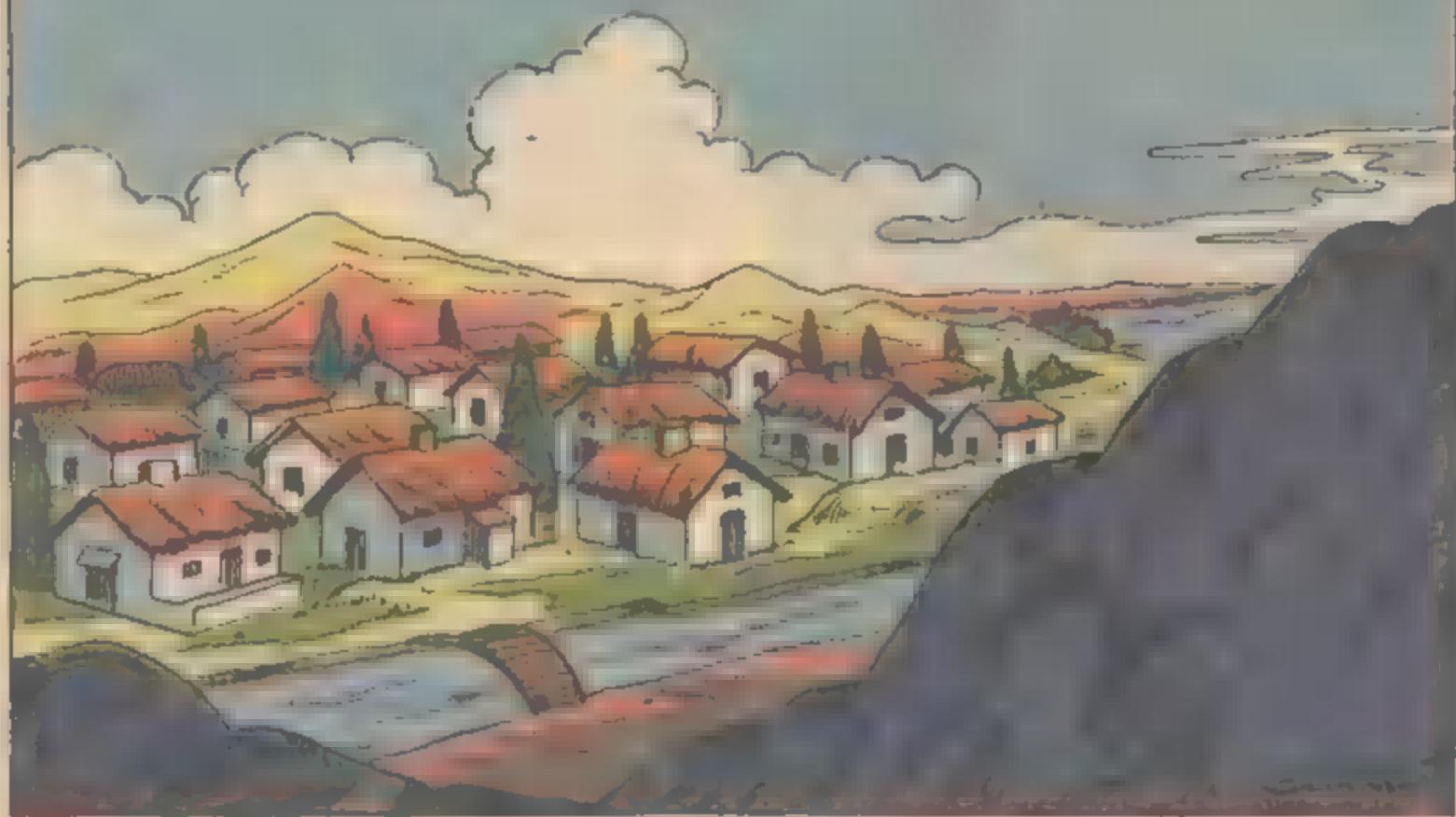
No Prior Experience

Patty Sharp was at the back seat of a two-seater plane with her 62-year-old father at the controls. The Piper Cub single-engine aircraft had taken off from Oregon, U.S.A., for sightseeing and photography. As 23-year-old Patty was talking to her father, she was horrified to see him slump in his seat. It was a heart attack. She had to lean forward to manipulate the buttons and switches but managed to land the plane safely at a small airstrip. No, she had never flown a plane before!

Clouds



VALLEY OF THE SINGING RIVER



Ages ago—so long ago that nobody can say when—a humble hamlet nestled amidst pleasant hills. Chattering brooks playfully rushed down the tender green slopes. And under the stone bridges and through the cobbled streets of the village flowed a river softly singing on its way.

Happily I pass through this kindly hamlet

*To the great ■■■ down, along
many a streamlet.*

*Blessed are those who are
selfless and giving,*

'Tis indeed the art of joyful

living.

In fact the river rejoiced in the little village through which it flowed. For indeed its folks were good and kind and cared for others more than they did for themselves. It felt happy and proud when people paused on the bridges or sat by its bank and quietly listened to its delightful song.

Years rolled by and the hard-working folks prospered and grew very rich. So much so they no longer liked to live in their humble dwellings.



Let's sing and dance while the church bells chime.

Thus day and night the townsfolk revelled to their heart's content. Not ■ thought they had to spare for others. No one paid heed to the bells while they rang from the belfry tower. On Sundays the church was almost empty. The priest hurried home to join the feasting, leaving the church gate locked, unmindful that a humble farmer and his family who had travelled ■ long way from the top of the hill were waiting to pray.

No more did the people find time to linger on the banks of the river to listen to its song. And the river continued to sing its dirty, but a sadder one.

One day ■ weary hunchbacked traveller climbed to the top of the hill and saw the lovely town that spread out on the valley below. "Such a sunny place! Surely the people there cannot fail to be kind and generous and give me some food and shelter," he said and began descending the hill.

He went past the town's gate and came to ■ cobbler's house. "My good man," said he, "I pray, would you kindly mend my shoes? They are full of holes and sore my weary feet. I have ■ long

So the entire hamlet was pulled down and in its stead appeared ■ town. The mayor built a magnificent palace for himself. The priest constructed a high-rising church and on its slender steeple swivelled ■ golden weathercock gleaming in the sunlight. And the people built beautiful mansions richly furnished and decorated.

*We are now wealthy,
We are now healthy.
Life is indeed good,
Oh, what ■ gay gay mood!
We must grow richer still,
Our coffers with gold pieces
fill.*

*Why think of others and waste
our time,*

long way to go. In return I shall bless you, my son."

"What? Repair the shoes of a mendicant who has not even a farthing to offer? Be off. I have work at hand which will earn me enough to feast and dance when evening comes. I can do without your blessings," replied the cobbler rudely.

The old beggar moved on. "Good Baker," he said before a bakery, "have pity on your grandpa. Many a weary mile I have travelled without a bite of food. Give me half a loaf. God shall bless you."

"Out you go," sternly answered the baker. "Not even the tiniest piece of bread shall you receive from here. I have got lots of savouries to bake for the evening feast."

With a deep sigh the old man plodded away and came to a great castle, with its battlements, towers and red flags fluttering atop its four turrets. Slowly he made his way to the kitchen. The cook and his assistants were busy preparing food for the evening banquet.

"Kind master of the kitchen," said the mendicant in a hopeful tone, "give me a glass of clear cold water from the pitcher there.



My throat is parched after a long and weary journey. You shall be blessed with happiness, my son."

"What? Clear cool water for nothing but an old man's blessings! Be off at once," shouted back the cook.

Just as he turned to go, the mayor himself appeared on the scene. "What's that beggar doing here?" he asked.

"Reverend Sir," said the old man bowing gracefully, "life has given you everything. You are rich and happy. Spare a little for a pauper. A glass of water is all I need."

"If I start satisfying every other



beggar like you, why, I myself will be reduced to penury in no time. Now, just get lost," angrily replied the mayor.

Towards the splendid church, with its weathercock gleefully swivelling in the evening breeze, the old man sadly wended his way. 'Everybody has refused to help, the cobbler, the baker, the cook and even the mayor himself. Surely the priest will be kind to me!' he thought.

Gently he knocked on the heavy wooden door. "Good evening, Father," he said soberly, "I pray, out of goodness of your heart, give me shelter for the

night."

"Ha! ha! ha! A beggar in this holy place! Oh, his pockets have nothing but mere holes!" laughed the guardian of God's house, dismissing the old man's appeal.

'Are there no gentle souls, kind and generous, in this charming town?' pondered the hunch-backed man as he crossed one of the bridges.

He stopped and leaning over the stone parapet, listened to the river. Softly it sang as it quietly flowed to its destination.

*Be not selfish or greedy,
Help the poor and the needy.
For your warmth and your
kindness,
You shall be rewarded with
happiness.*

*O Friends! Pay heed to the
words of this river,*

Ere everything is lost forever.

The old man sighed and smiled sadly and began to climb the hill. The sun had set. The stars twinkled in the sky. The path had become dark and dangerous. Suddenly he saw a yellow light glowing not very far away. Reaching it he came across a poor farmer with a lantern in one hand and a staff in the other, returning home from his fields.

"My good man," said he, "I am weary from a long long journey. Could you help me find a morsel of food and a roof over my head for the night?"

"Grandpa, you are welcome to my humble dwelling; just a furlong away from here. Naturally it is nothing compared to the splendid mansions you have just visited," replied the simple man leading him towards his cottage.

"My boy, are you happy?" asked the old man.

"We are a small family, happy and contented. Every Sunday we go to the church in the town below to pray and offer our gratitude to the Lord. It is only on such rare occasions, when we have guests, that we wish we had more provisions to properly entertain them," replied the farmer as they reached his cottage.

The farmer's wife and his two little children greeted their guest with the warmest of smiles. Most happily they shared their food and drink with him.

"Come, Grandpa, sleep well," the farmer said after he had prepared a bed of straw and feathers in the cosiest corner of their dwelling. "I feel so sad that I



have so little to offer you."

"My good fellow, what little you have done for me is far greater than you can ever imagine," answered the mendicant as he closed his eyes.

In the morning the farmer and his wife were amazed to see the table laid for breakfast, spread with varieties of food that they had never even dreamt of in their life. A large jug stood on one end, full to the brim with thick creamy milk. But when they looked for their guest to greet him, he was not in his bed nor was he anywhere else.

Realising how hungry they

were and how hungry they had so often been, the small happy family ate with relish. But no sooner had they finished than, lo and behold, the empty platters and the jug again got filled with food and drink.

"Alas, the visitor — had last night was none other than an angel in disguise," said the farmer to his wife after a moment of contemplation.

All of a sudden black clouds gathered in the sky. Lightning flashed and thunder echoed and re-echoed over the hills. Darker and darker it grew and the day almost turned into night. A terrible storm brew up bringing torrential rains that lashed the little town below. The river swelled and with — angry roar flooded the cobbled streets, the castle, the church and all the splendid houses.

It rained for seven days and nights. When at last the sun shone again, the farmer and his wife came out of their cottage. What do you think they saw in front of them? There stretched a great lake. There was no trace of the town or its inhabitants.

The family atop the hill prospered and there was never a shortage of food or drink in their house.

Often when the lake receded one could catch a glimpse of the golden weathercock that once gleamed in the sunshine. Sometimes on Christmas eve, when the blessed family would look at its serene water, it would seem to them that they could hear the chiming of the church bells below.

The river flows on, still singing its sweet sad song—the story of a proud little town that once was.

— Retold by Anup Kishore Das



PRIDE AND PRESTIGE

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O king, you seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite so as to achieve something. If it is to safeguard your pride, you would better know what happened to someone who similarly wanted to keep up his prestige."

The vampire then began narrating the story of Veerasenan



to avoid going to Dhirasenan on those days he would be sharing his food or clothes. Madhavan was very proud of his family and upbringing. Many a time Dhirasenan tried to offer him something, but every time Madhavan would excuse himself under some pretext.

Years went by. One day, Vidyadharan called Dhirasenan and told him, "You've completed the curriculum here and it's time for you to return to the palace. When you grow up, you should rule your kingdom well."

Before leaving the gurukulam, Dhirasenan sought out Madhavan. "Madhavan, it's time to bid good-bye. I wish to present you with this pearl necklace as a memento of our friendship. You must accept at least this small gift."

Madhavan smiled and said, "My good friend! Do you expect me to say that only a gift can cement our friendship? Even without such a costly gift, our friendship should remain for ever."

Dhirasenan appreciated Madhavan's views. "As you wish. I'm now returning to the palace. But remember this; if ever you want anything from me, you should not hesitate to come to me and

who was the King of Veerapuri. Dhirasenan was his only son. He sent the boy to a gurukulam run by a sage called Vidyadharan. Dhirasenan was an obedient student.

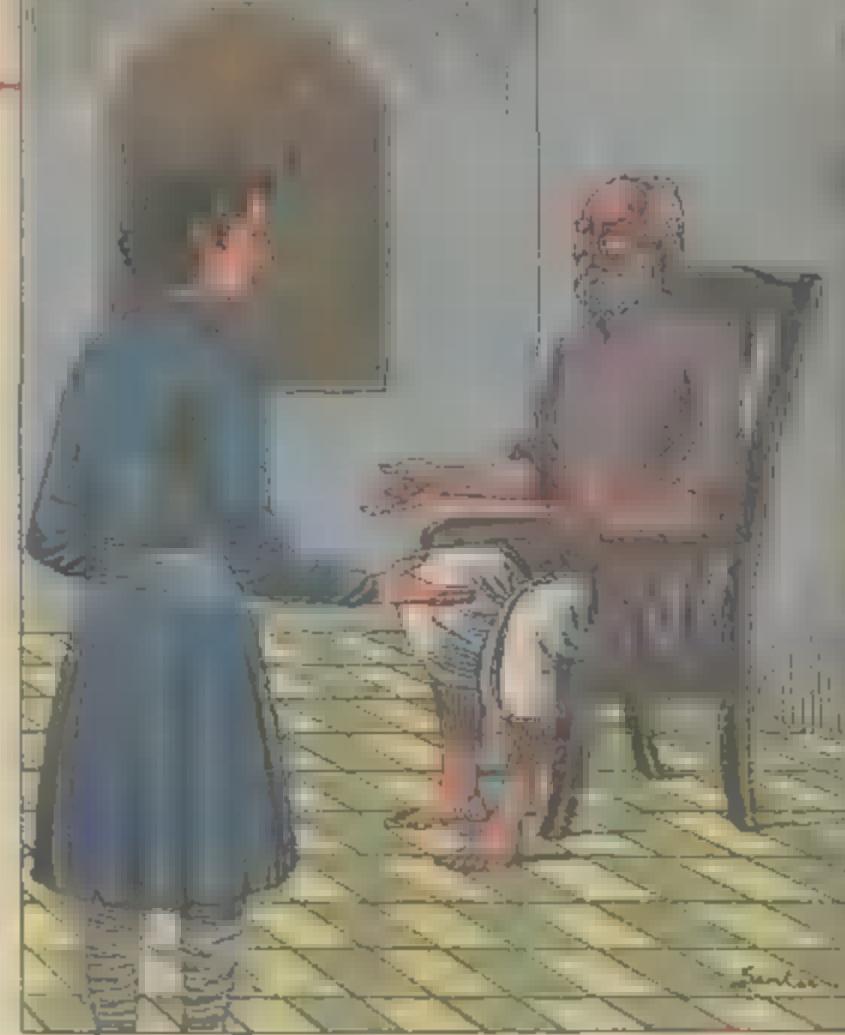
Along with Dhirasenan in the gurukulam were other students. The prince was an exception among them as they all came from not so well-to-do families. The prince was not one who would show off but would always share with them the food and clothes he received from the palace. While most of his classmates eagerly awaited such occasions, Madhavan kept to himself and even tried

ask for it. I shall always cherish our friendship."

Soon afterwards, Dhirasenan became the King of Veerapuri. Meanwhile Madhavan, too, completed his education and returned to his village. He might have got a better job if he had gone and tried elsewhere, but Madhavan chose to remain in his village where a zamindar gave him a small job. Madhavan was happy — he could be of some help to his family with his meagre earnings.

One day, his father's friend, Sadasivan, came on a visit. He told Madhavan about his son. "Madhavan, may I seek a small favour? You know, Kesavan is unemployed and he is not able to get a job anywhere. I'm getting old day by day, and I'm unable to bear the family burden. The sooner Kesavan gets into a job, it would be better for my family. I'm told you and King Dhirasenan were together in the same gurukulam. Maybe you can put in a word to him about Kesavan. You'll be able to save a family from abject poverty."

Madhavan took Kesavan along with him to meet Dhirasenan, who was very happy to



his old friend. He readily agreed to Madhavan's request and took Kesavan into his army.

Word soon spread in the village that it was due to Madhavan's efforts and his plea with the king that Kesavan got a job ultimately. From then the villagers held Madhavan in great esteem.

After some days, a distant relation of Madhavan called on him. Soman said, "Madhavan, I'm one of the officers of the king. I used to oblige people and they would give me something in return. Now, I've been accused of accepting bribes and dismissed from service. You know the king



"We don't grow cotton, and have therefore to buy cloth from elsewhere, but people here can't afford the price. If only we could buy cotton from our neighbouring countries, we could make cloth ourselves and sell it at lower prices. But that will require the king's permission. Do you think you can secure his permission for me? I shall share with you whatever profit I earn from this deal."

Madhavan thought for a while and said, "No, I don't want any share of your profit. From what you have told me, I surmise that your idea will ultimately benefit our own people. I shall certainly speak to the king."

The next day, Madhavan and Udayaraj went to the palace. When Madhavan explained their mission, the king was happy and immediately gave permission to Udayaraj to bring cotton from the neighbouring countries. Udayaraj was able to manufacture cloth and sell it at cheap rates to the people. He earned a good profit and tried to persuade Madhavan to accept a share of it. But Madhavan, true to his word, rejected the offer.

By now everybody in the village had come to know of

intimately. Can't you speak to him and see that I'm reinstated?"

Madhavan was not very happy on hearing his plea. "No, I don't think I can take up this matter with the king. After all, if you had taken money from the people, it is as good as accepting bribes. You've to suffer the punishment." He sent Soman away.

Somehow Dhirasenan came to know about this, and he appreciated Madhavan's honesty. He was proud that he had a friend like Madhavan.

Another day, a prominent merchant in the village met Madhavan. Udayaraj told him,

Madhavan's readiness to help people. They went to him whenever they had some problem. But he obliged only those who approached him with honesty.

All this while, the zamindar who employed him was watching him grow in the esteem of the people. He noticed his honesty and pride and remembered that he was looking for someone like Madhavan to wed his daughter. He disclosed his wish to Madhavan. "Sir, I'm afraid my family and I won't be a match to the prestige and honour of your family. You must excuse me," said Madhavan most humbly.

But the zamindar would not spare him so easily. He arranged a big party one day and invited all the prominent people of the place. Madhavan, too, was among the invitees and was struck by the extravagance of the zamindar.

As if the zamindar had read his mind, he confided in him. "You see, I've not been paying my taxes for some years and was thus able to set aside some money. But now I hear the king is contemplating action against me. Madhavan, you've to plead my case with him and get exemption



from payment of the taxes."

Madhavan was in a dilemma. "It's your duty, sir, to pay your taxes correctly and at the appropriate time. You've certainly defaulted, and I'm sorry I can't recommend your case."

The zamindar was upset as he listened to Madhavan, but soon regained composure and reminded him, "The king had granted old age pension and money relief to widows. But many of them have not been receiving this from the king's officers. If I had defaulted in making payments, that cannot be isolated for any action. What do



you say for that?"

"If the king's officers have failed in their duty," Madhavan argued with the zamindar, "you can't expect a reprieve on that count."

The zamindar then revealed to Madhavan that among those who attended his party were some spies of the king. "They would have listened to our conversation and heard you criticise the officers. Don't think your friendship with the king will remain as of old."

To which Madhavan reacted thus: "Sir, don't be under any wrong impression. Even if the

king were to be told of our conversation, he won't misunderstand me. He'll be glad that I had only found fault with those officers who had failed in their duty. I've every confidence in my friend, the king."

Thereupon, the zamindar challenged him: "Let's take ■ wager. You call on your friend in the next three days. If you find there is no change in his attitude to you, I shall concede defeat and commend your friendship with him. However, if you fail to get the usual reception from the king, you must accept defeat and agree to marry my daughter."

After three days, Madhavan went to the palace. Dhirasenan appeared to be cross with him. "I heard that you were critical of my administration. I never expected that kind of attitude from someone whom I was treating ■ a friend. You may go now."

Madhavan went back to his village and told everything to the zamindar, and accepted his daughter's hand in marriage.

The vampire ended his story there and turned to King Vikramaditya: "O king, why didn't Madhavan think of approaching his friend, Dhirasenan, for a job?

He was willing to help Kesavan, the son of his father's friend, but not his own relation, Soman. Why? Madhavan helped Udayaraj to earn a huge profit. Yet, he refused to accept a share. Why? Dhirasenan knew of Madhavan's honesty, still he was willing to forsake his friendship with him when he heard that Madhavan had criticised his administration. Why? If you can't answer these questions, mind you, your head will be blown to pieces."

Vikramaditya thought for a while before he answered: "Madhavan was proud of his upbringing; he was quite different from ordinary persons. He didn't nourish any desire that he could not reach, and didn't take advantage of any situation to which he was drawn. Remember, he had refused to accept anything from Prince Dhirasenan when he

was distributing food and clothes that he got from the palace among all his other classmates at the gurukulam. Madhavan was the lone exception even then. In fact, even when the prince pressed him to accept a gift, Madhavan had no hesitation in refusing it. He was an idealist without a match. Later in life, he helped only those who he thought really deserved any help, and he did so unhesitatingly. But he never misused his friendship with the king; he did not seek from him anything for himself. In fact, the king knew all this only too well and put on that attitude only to save Madhavan from being pestered by favour-seekers."

The vampire realised that Vikramaditya had outwitted him once again. He gave him the slip, and flew back to the ancient tree, taking the corpse with him.



WORLD OF SPORT



Longest Race

The world's longest (30km) cross-country race takes place in Lidingoloppet near Stockholm. This year's race held on October 6 was won by Boniface Merande of Kenya in 28 min 41sec., improving upon the record set last time by Simon Robert Naali of Tanzania, who came second this year, by 2 seconds. The Kenyan runner has taken part in all the 8 races held till now. Some 10,000 runners were at the start of the race. In the women's event (15km), Wang Yan-gang of China led the field of 5,000 runners.

Chandran



World No. 1

With her victory over Martina Navratilova in the Virginia Slims Championship on Nov. 24, the 18-year-old Yugoslav, Monica Seles, is undoubtedly World No. 1 among women tennis players. She played 16 tournaments in 1991, reaching the final in all of them, and winning 10 titles. She won 74 out of 80 matches played in this historic season, displaying great consistency and concentration. Incidentally, Seles broke Steffi Graf's record of No. 1 ranking for 186 consecutive weeks.



Kapil's record

Kapil Dev has become the first player in the world to take 200 wickets in one-day internationals. He achieved this feat on October 22 in his 166th match at Sharjah, when he trapped Winston Benjamin of W Indies leg-before. While taking these number of wickets, Kapil conceded 5,253 runs off 8,375 deliveries in one-day matches. His best tally was 5 wickets for 43 runs. The 32-year-old Indian paceman played his first one-day international in 1978-79 against Pakistan.



VEER HANUMAN

15

(Overcome with fear, the demonees in the Asoka garden rush to Ravana and tell him of the havoc wrought by a strange monkey. The demon king sends his soldiers to capture the monkey, who kills all of them. Ravana then sends his commanders, later his valiant younger son, Akash, all of whom meet with their end at the hands of Hanuman. Finally, Ravana's eldest son, Indrajit, is sent and he manages to bind him with rope all over and takes him to his father. Ravana and his courtiers wonder, "Who's this monkey? Why did he come here?"')

Ravana could not control his anger when he was told about the strange monkey who had intruded into his gardens and created all kinds of havoc there. Normally anybody would tremble at the very mention of Ravana's name. How then could a mere monkey dare enter the precincts where Ravana stayed?

"Go and catch hold of that monkey!" shouted Ravana to his bodyguards in the palace.

The demons left with all sorts of weapons to catch hold of Hanuman. They ■■ him at the entrance to Asokavana. They surrounded him, but Hanuman prevented them from approaching him by swirling his tail and

ENCOUNTER WITH DEMONS



When they heard Hanuman's challenge, the demons shivered in their feet and could not move a step further towards him. But at the same time they could not have disobeyed their master. So, they hurled their weapons at Hanuman one after the other. Meanwhile, Hanuman pulled out one of the pillars of the gate and with it beat the demons, crushing them under its weight. He then took his stance at the entrance once again.

lashing it on the ground. The sound of the banging could be heard like thunder all around Lanka.

Hanuman's eyes were a shining red. He glared at every one of the demons and cried aloud, "Victory to Sri Rama! Victory to Prince Lakshmana! May King Sugriva rule for ever! I'm the messenger of the ruler of Kosala. I'm the son of Lord Vayu. My name is Hanuman. I can take a thousand Ravanas single-handed. I shall destroy all of Lanka in your very presence, before I go to Rama and tell him of Devi Sita's presence here."

The few demons who escaped Hanuman's wrath ran to Ravana and told him how the huge monkey had destroyed their companions. Ravana then ordered Jambumali, the bravest of all demons, to go and kill the monkey. Jambumali, who was the son of Prahasta, the Chief of Ravana's army, led a contingent of soldiers to Asokavana. In the meantime, Hanuman had already strayed into another garden, called Shwetavana, and destroyed it after killing its keepers. There was not a single demon left to safeguard the garden. By then Jambumali, riding a chariot, reached the place where Hanuman was eagerly awaiting more demons.

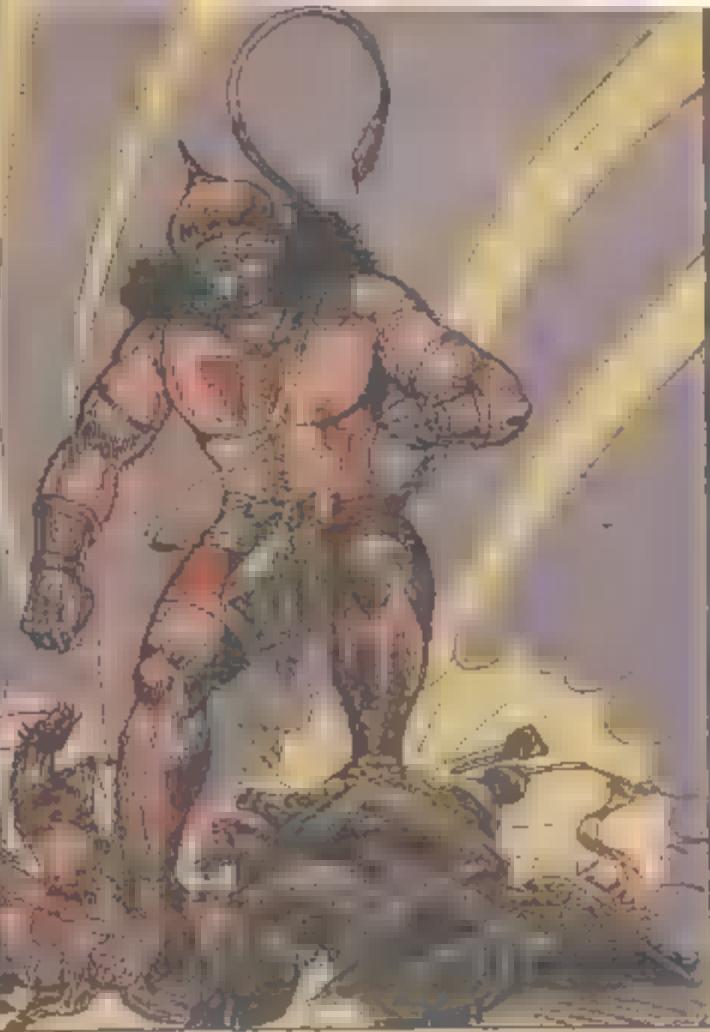
The soldiers began attacking

him. Their arrows did inflict injuries on Hanuman's body here and there, but none of them affected him, though his body had now turned a scarlet red with the blood from the wounds. Hanuman pulled out a huge boulder and threw it at Jambumali, who warded it off with an arrow which split the stone into pieces. Hanuman then plucked one tree after another and aimed it at Jambumali, who successfully sent them hurtling to the ground with his arrows. He ■■■■■ managed to aim some arrows ■ Hanuman. But he caught hold of an iron pillar and threw it at Jambumali. It killed the demon

and crushed his chariot.

Some of his soliders went back ■ Ravana and reported to him how the monkey had killed Jambumali. Ravana could not believe his ears. "You mean to say Jambumali is no more? He was the strongest among you all. And yet a monkey could kill him. Could it ■■■■■ mightier than Jambumali? Let ■■■■■ see whom I can send now. The monkey should be conquered." He called for the seven brave sons of one of his ministers and asked them to go and capture the strange monkey. "I shall capture him!" said the youngsters, each one vying with the others.





The moment they reached Asokavana, all the seven of them began showering arrows on Hanuman, who avoided them hitting him, by jumping up and down dexterously. He managed to catch hold of one of the boys and hit the others with him, thus killing every one of them.

The news of the killing of all the seven youngsters by Hanuman really stunned Ravana. He did not reveal his discomfiture and ordered five of his army commanders—Virupaksha, Ruhakshana, Durdhara, Hrakasa, and Javakarna—to take Hanuman captive. In one voice

they assured Ravana that they would capture the monkey—however strong he might be—alive and bring him to Ravana.

Ravana told them that he had heard of mighty monkeys like Sugriva, Bali, Neela, Dwividha, and others. "Can there be anybody mightier than they? Could Indra have produced a giant of a monkey and sent him to us? Better be careful; don't think you'll be able to overpower Hanuman so easily," Ravana cautioned his commanders.

All the five then got on to their chariots and led an army of soldiers, horses, and elephants in search of Hanuman. On seeing him stand at the entrance of Asokavana, they attacked him with all kinds of weapons. And Hanuman cleverly leaped into the air so that no weapon could hit him. An expert archer, Durdhara then showered arrows on him. Hanuman suddenly became giant-sized and strode towards Durdhara's chariot which in no time was reduced to mere dust. He also killed the demon-commander.

Next Hanuman pulled out a huge tree and with that he killed Virupaksha and Ruhakshana.

Meanwhile, Hrakasa and Javakarna continued their attack on Hanuman, who crushed them beneath a big boulder. He did not spare any of their soldiers. After annihilating all of them, he went back to Asokavana and waited for more of Ravana's men to become his prey!

When Ravana heard of the fate of his five commanders, his anger knew no bounds. He called his youngest son, Akshakumar, and told him of all that had happened. "Let me go and capture that monkey," said the young warrior. He rode his chariot drawn by eight horses and rode so fast that it almost flew above the ground.

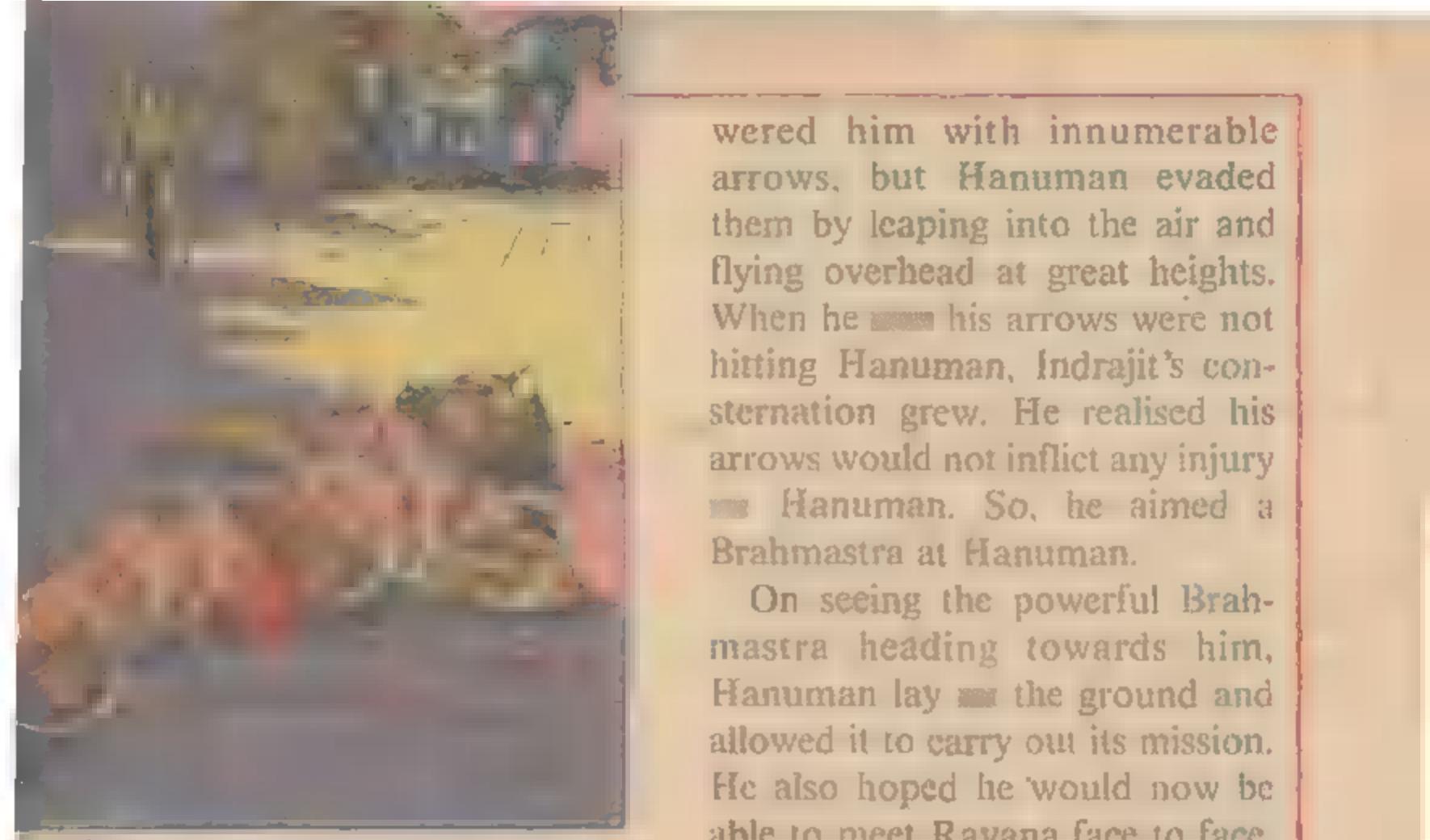
The moment he saw Hanuman, Akshakumar realised that he was facing no ordinary monkey. So, he planned his strategy and only then did he begin the attack. The fight that ensued tested their might. The more fierce was Akshakumar's attack, Hanuman's enthusiasm too rose. His flew hither and thither above Akshakumar, who managed to raise his chariot to equal heights so that his weapons could land on Hanuman.

Hanuman marvelled at the



prowess of the young Akshakumar. He wondered how strong the boy would become when he grew up. He, therefore, wanted to overpower him then and there. He caught hold of the boy's legs and whirled him for a while before hitting him on the ground. Akshakumar did not survive for a moment longer.

Akshakumar's death at the hands of Hanuman was a severe shock to Ravana. He then called his elder son, Indrajit. "This monkey seems to have immense strength. See how he has killed all those whom I had sent to capture him—including your brother.



Now, I can't send anybody other than you. After all, you could subdue even Lord Indra. However, you'd be well advised to be careful, but ensure that you succeed in capturing him. It's better if you went alone. I know nobody can face your arrows, and I'm sure success will be yours."

Indrajit went round his father thrice and said, "You don't doubt my capabilities. I shall capture him and bring him to you howsoever strong he might be." He rode his chariot to Asokavana. In his encounter with Hanuman, Indrajit, too, sho-

wered him with innumerable arrows, but Hanuman evaded them by leaping into the air and flying overhead at great heights. When he ■ his arrows were not hitting Hanuman, Indrajit's consternation grew. He realised his arrows would not inflict any injury ■ Hanuman. So, he aimed a Brahmastra at Hanuman.

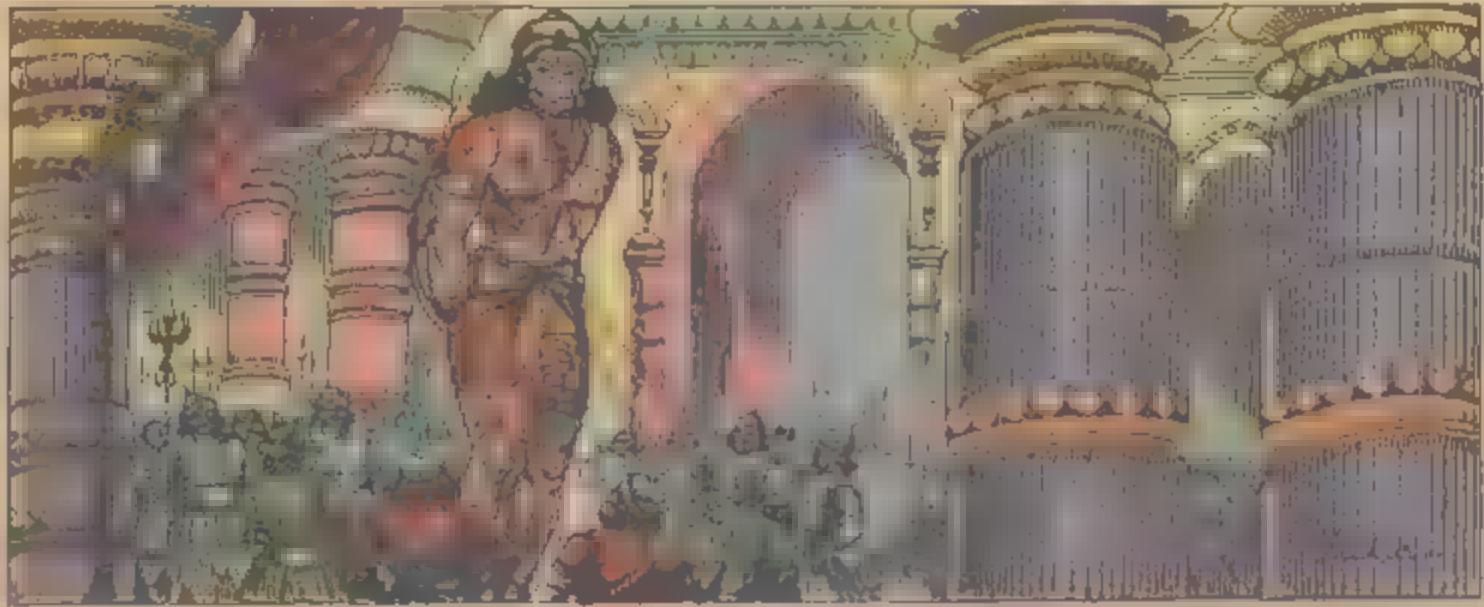
On seeing the powerful Brahmastra heading towards him, Hanuman lay ■ the ground and allowed it to carry out its mission. He also hoped he would now be able to meet Ravana face to face. He was certain that once the Brahmastra fulfilled its objective of binding him, it would not hurt him.

In no time was Hanuman bound from head to foot. Indrajit ordered some demons to take him to Ravana. The demons pushed him, pulled him, hit him, and dragged him to the presence of Ravana. Indrajit pointed to Hanuman and told everybody in the court, "This is the monkey who has been creating a nuisance in Lanka!"

Hanuman glared at each and every one of the courtiers. They all wondered, "Who can be this monkey? Where has he come



- Vanek et...



from? Who sent him here? For what purpose? Does he know anyone in Lanka?"

Hanuman looked at Ravana from head to foot, eyes all blood-red and spitting fire. Ravana asked his bodyguards to untie Hanuman. The ministers present there asked him, "Why did you come here? Who are you really?"

Hanuman faced them and rep-

lied, "I'm ■ messenger from Sugriva, the monkey-king. It was he who sent me here."

Ravana then asked Prahasta to find out from Hanumah what his purpose was in coming to Lanka. "Why did he destroy my gardens? Why did he scare the demonesses? Why did he kill the demon-warriors? Find out everything."

(To continue)

Ravindran (to his friend) : Ah! Sunday morning! I just love lying in bed and ring the bell for my servant.

Surendran : But you don't keep ■ servant?

Ravindran : No, but I've a bell.



NO DOUBT!

Paramasivan of Panayur once went to the market to buy a bird, ■ his children wished to keep ■ pet. In one of the shops he found ■ lovely parrot in a cage. He asked the shopkeeper what its price was, and he answered he would sell it for a hundred rupees.

"Did you say a hundred rupees for this bird?" asked Paramasivan unbelievingly.

"If you've any doubt, you may ask the parrot itself," said the shopkeeper casually.

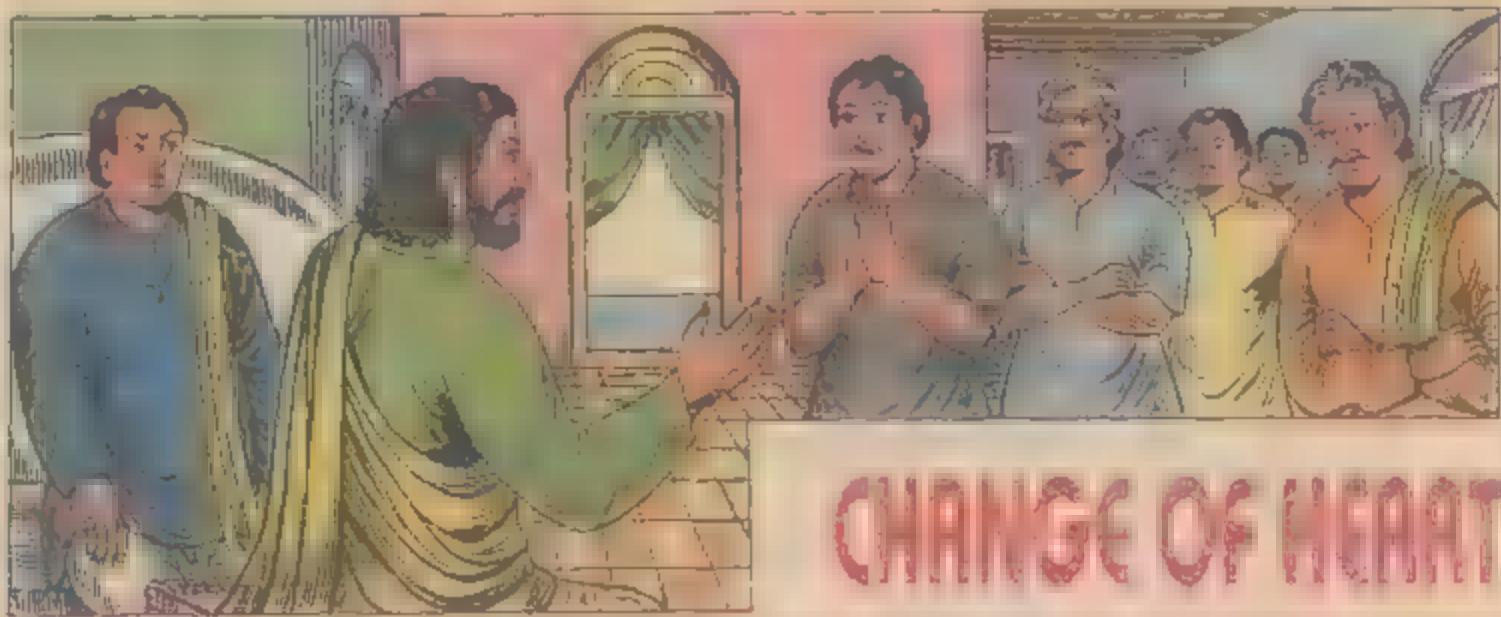
Paramasivan turned to the parrot. "Is your price one hundred rupees?" "Why doubt?" responded the parrot.

Paramasivan was satisfied. He paid the money to the shopkeeper and took the parrot home.

At home, to whatever questions he put to the parrot, it replied, "Why doubt?" Paramasivan then realised that the parrot had been taught only that much, and nothing else. "Look at that! And I paid ■ hundred rupees for you. I must be a fool!" he cursed himself.

"Why doubt?" was the parrot's reaction as usual. On hearing this, Paramasivan's wife and children could not control their laughter.





CHANGE OF HEART

Dhanapalan, as the name suggests, was the wealthiest of all in Ponnur. He made his riches by various means and became prominent among the rich people of that place. But strangely, nobody ever said a good word about him.

One day, his cousin, Dayanidhi, arrived in Ponnur on a visit and stayed with him. Somehow his fame had spread far and wide, as he was a very kind-hearted gentleman. He had a soft corner for everybody and would even forgive if anybody had been unfair to him. He, too, was quite rich, but he most willingly shared his wealth with others, often giving it away as charity. Nobody who approached him for help went back empty-handed. No wonder then he was a popular figure, and people flocked to see him wherever he went.

As long as he stayed with Dhanapalan in Ponnur, there was no time when the house was not crowded. Dayanidhi met every one of them, listening to their problems and pleas and extending a helping hand to all those in whom he took pity. Everybody went back satisfied and happy. Naturally, Dhanapalan was jealous of his cousin. One day, he asked Dayanidhi, "How're you able to make everyone happy?"

To which Dayanidhi replied, "A person can earn riches by different ways. But he'll remain selfish. Money may bring in all comfort, but it can't by itself secure a good word or praise. Everybody should care for others right from one's childhood. One should not remain unconcerned about another's misfortune or tragedy. A gentleman will even

love his enemy. All that I had earned I spent for others, and they all became my friends. Maybe that's why they praise me and show respect to me. I don't look at others different from myself. I treat their problems as my own. Mind you, I won't offer my help just to earn flattery. That way, I'm even able to reform many people if I find they have gone astray. I'm therefore, not surprised if they don't mind taking the trouble of coming and meeting me."

After Dayanidhi's departure from Ponnur, Dhanapalan started wondering how he, too, could become popular with people and earn a name and fame for himself. He contemplated for several days and finally decided on a strategy.

Chinnan was a poor man of Ponnur. Always needy, he would sometimes resort to petty thefts. Dhanapalan sent for him. "Hey, Chinnan, aren't you ashamed of your conduct? See, nobody is ready to give you any work. However, I shall employ you and even give you a salary. But you should carry out just as I instruct."

The poor man was overjoyed



and expressed his readiness to act just as Dhanapalan directed. "You must come and rob my place. I shall give you the key to my treasure-chest. My watchman, Veerayyan, would catch hold of you and bring you to me. I shall feign to forgive you and announce that I'm going to employ you in my house. I'm sure people will praise me. Maybe, the other thieves will also reform themselves."

Chinnan had no difficulty in entering Dhanapalan's house that very night. He deliberately dropped the key on the iron chest once or twice, and the noise woke



cious. My master will not suspect me. Do you agree?"

What kind of watchman is this? wondered Chinnan. He rebuked him. "How man is overcome at the sight of a lot of money has been proved by your attitude. I never expected this of you. If your master were to come to know of this, you'll certainly lose your job, and you'll be on the street. So, it's better you drive away all such evil thoughts. I've already forgiven you; and I shall not give you away to your master."

Veerayyan fell at Chinnan's feet and sought forgiveness. "I shall be ever grateful to you for your kindness. I can't even now imagine how I harboured such evil thoughts. But do tell me, how did you manage to get in?"

Chinnan then revealed the strategy worked out by Dhanapalan, and asked Veerayyan not to lose a single moment to take him to Dhanapalan as a culprit.

Meanwhile, Dhanapalan was keenly watching all the happenings and eavesdropping on Chinnan and Veerayyan. He was stupefied. By then, Veerayyan was already leading Chinnan to

up Veerayyan. He wondered who would have managed to get past him and enter the house. He peeped through the open door and saw Chinnan inside.

By then he had already opened the chest. And when he saw the silver coins and jewellery in it, he was wonderstruck. For that matter, even Veerayyan, who had been in Dhanapalan's service for several years, could not believe his eyes. He accosted Chinnan. "You rogue! How did you manage to get in? Look here, if you share the spoil with me, I'll allow you to escape. I'll then take some drug and let myself fall uncon-

where he thought his master would be.

Dhanapalan sent away Veerayyan and turned to Chinnan. "I happened to listen to all your conversation with Veerayyan. You succeeded in changing the mind of Veerayyan when he thought of cheating me. You even forgave him. I never knew you could be so honest and straightforward in your attitude; I had all along taken you to be a scoundrel. Whereas, I had complete faith in Veerayyan without realising that he could turn a crook if he got the opportunity. I'm going to dismiss him from my service. I want you to take his place and be my watchman."

"Sir, I wouldn't want anything to happen to Veerayyan," Chinnan excused himself. "Nobody is willing to give me

any work because I've earned a notoriety as a thief. But Veerayyan thought of stealing for the first time in his life. If people were to come to know of this, who would give him any work? He would only become a pauper like me. That's why I myself decided to forgive him, to bring about a change of heart in him. He's a good fellow. You should pardon him."

Dhanapalan was struck by Chinnan's attitude. "How strange! A thief like you even takes pity on another thief, and would go to help him. If so, why can't I show similar generosity? All right, let him continue to be my watchman. I shall give you some other job."

Before long, Dhanapalan, too, earned fame like his cousin, Dayanidhi, and became popular in Ponnur.





LET US KNOW

■ ■ ■ are the ■ ■ ■ wonders of the world?

—Niranjan P. Bidargaddi, ■ ■ ■

The seven wonders of ancient times were the pyramids of Egypt, the hanging gardens of Babylon, the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, the statue of Zeus at Olympia, the mausoleum of Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes, and the Pharos or lighthouse at Alexandria.

Which is ■ ■ ■ tower in ■ ■ ■ world?

—N. Krishna Kant, Narsipatnam

The tallest self-supporting tower is the CN Tower in Metro Center, Toronto, Canada (555m) used for television purposes.

■ ■ ■ is meant by Nobel Prize?

—C. Munikrishna Lal, ■ ■ ■

Six coveted international prizes are awarded annually out of an endowment from a fortune left by Alfred Bernhard Nobel (1833-1896), a Swedish chemist who invented dynamite in 1867 and smokeless gunpowder in 1889. He amassed a large fortune from the manufacture of explosives. Originally five prizes were awarded, for achievements in chemistry, physics, medicine, literature and the promotion of peace. In 1969, economics was added. The first set of prizes ■ ■ ■ awarded in 1901. The three Indian recipients are C.V. Raman (physics), Rabindranath Tagore (literature), and Mother Teresa (peace).

Is Russia in Asia or Europe?

—K. Pramitha, Bangalore

The name Russia, in modern usage, refers to the Russian federation, which was among the 15 Russian republics that constituted the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R) or the Soviet Union. The geographical ■ ■ ■ of Russia is a part of Europe, the second smallest continent, which is contiguous with Asia, the largest of all continents.

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M. Natarajan



M. Natarajan

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A learned man is a tank; a wise man is a spring.

—Alger

The more man denies himself, the more he shall obtain from God.

—Horace

The gods of Vengeance act in silence.

—Schiller



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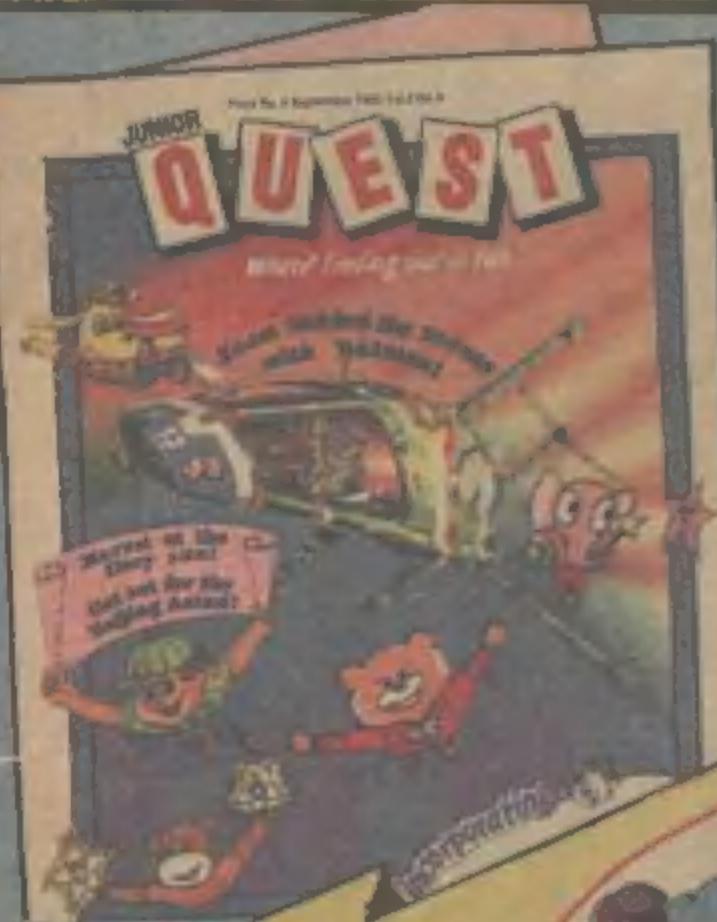
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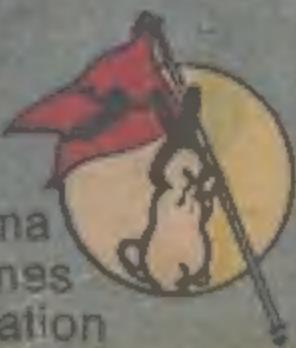
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